

Appln No. 09/690,796

Amdt date July 25, 2005

Reply to Office action of March 23, 2005

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 1, 5-10, 17, 22, 42, 50-52, 55-59, 61, 92, 107, 108, 110, 113, and 114 are currently pending. Claims 1, 5-7, 17, 22, 50-52, 55, 57, 61, 92, 107 and 108 are amended and claim 16 is cancelled.

The Examiner has not acknowledged the IDS that was filed March 8, 2005. Applicants respectfully request acknowledgment of the above-mentioned IDS by initialing and returning the attached copy of the same IDS.

Claims 1, 5-10, 16, 17, 22, 42, 50-52, 55-59, 61, 92, 107, 108, 110, 113, and 114 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103 as being unpatentable over Cordery et al. (US 6,466,921) in view of Pierce et al. (US 6,151,591) and Rosenzweig et al. (US 6,081,810). Applicants submit that all of the pending claims are patentable over the cited references, and reconsideration and allowance of the pending claims are respectfully requested.

Amended independent claim 1 includes, among other limitations, "a plurality of cryptographic modules, each of the plurality of cryptographic modules capable of authenticating, processing value for the VBI, and generating indicia data for plurality of users, wherein before each of the authentication, processing value, and generating indicia data for a given user is performed, the respective cryptographic module retrieves the data record for the given user from the database." None of the cited references, alone or in combination teach or suggest the above limitation.

Cordery's system includes a meter box 44 that generates at least one digital token or signs the postage transaction and

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updates the meter record corresponding to the transaction for each postage transaction; an authentication box 40 to authenticate a mailer; and a transaction box 42 to sign user transaction records, such as logins. (FIG. 2, and col. 7, lines 35-65). As shown in FIG. 3 and described in the related text, in "step 105, Function Server 34 requests access to the mailers account information stored in Database Server 36. At step 110, Database Server 36 sends mailer information, meter information, including a meter record associated with the mailer initiating the request. At step 115, Function Server 34 sends the mailer information to Authentication Box 40. When the mailer is authenticated at step 120, then, at step 125, Function Server 34 sends the meter information, including the meter record to meter box 44. At step 130, meter box 44 authenticates the meter record, decrypts the encrypted token key which is part of the record, verifies freshness of the record, performs accounting, generates a token, updates the freshness data and signs the meter record, which is returned to Function Server 34. At step 135, Function Server 34 sends the updated and signed meter record to Database Server 36 and sends to the Communication Server 32 the token and associated postal information needed to create an indicium. At step 140, Database Server 36 stores the updated and signed meter record. At step 145, Communication Server 32 sends the token and postal information to mailer PC 20." (Col. 9, lines 19-40).

Therefore, the mailers account information stored in the database is only accessed once by the Function Server and sent to the authentication box to authenticate the mailer (step 120).

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The account information is then sent from the authentication box to the meter box to process value for the postage and generate indicia data for the mailer (step 130). When the mailer is authenticated, the value for the postage is processed, and the indicia data is generated that the updated meter record is stored back in the database.

In contrast, the present invention, as claimed by claim 1 a "respective cryptographic module retrieves the data record for the given user from the database," "before each of the authentication, processing value, and generating indicia data for a given user is performed." This provides the present invention with the capability of one secure database of data records that is accessible by any of the cryptographic module for any of the authentication, processing value, and generating indicia data functions.

Likewise, Pierce or Rosenzweig, alone or in combination with Cordery, do not teach or suggest the above limitation. As a result, independent claim 1 is patentable over cited references.

Amended independent claim 50 includes, among other limitations, "authenticating the given user; retrieving the data record for the given user from the database for processing value for the VBI for the given user; updating and storing back in the database the data record for the given user after processing value for the given user; retrieving the data record for the given user from the database for generating indicia data for the given user; and updating and storing back in the database the

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data record for the given user after generating indicia data for the given user."

As discussed above, Cordery, alone or in combination, does not teach or suggest "retrieving the data record for the given user from the database for processing value for the VBI for the given user" or "retrieving the data record for the given user from the database for generating indicia data for the given user."

Additionally, Cordery, alone or in combination, does not teach or suggest "updating and storing back in the database the data record for the given user after processing value for the given user," or "updating and storing back in the database the data record for the given user after generating indicia data for the given user."

As describes above, it is only after the mailer is authenticated, the value for the postage is processed, AND the indicia data is generated that the updated meter record is stored back in the database. (FIG. 3 and col. 9, lines 23-39).

Similarly, Pierce or Rosenzweig, alone or in combination with Cordery, do not teach or suggest the above limitations. Consequently, independent claim 50 is also patentable over cited references.

Independent claims 92 and 107 include similar patentable limitations and therefore, they are also patentable over cited references.

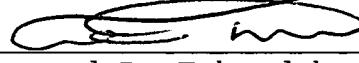
Dependant claims 5-10, 17, 22, 42, 51-52, 55-59, 61, 108, 110, and 113-114 depend directly or indirectly from respective allowable claims 1, 50 and 107, and thus are allowable as are

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claims1, 50 and 107, and for additional limitations recited therein.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, it is respectfully submitted that this application is now in condition for allowance, and accordingly, reconsideration and allowance are respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,
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